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FBIS 1477-88
2 August 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: SSA/DDA

FROM:

Chief, Administrative Staff, FBIS, DS&T

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SUBJECT: Movement of Household Effects Between Local Living Quarters,
Caversham England

1. Action Requested: This memorandum requests an understanding of acceptable grounds for a waiver of the provisions outlined in [redacted] to permit reimbursement for specific employee claims for occasional moving of household effects between living quarters at the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) Bureau in Caversham, United Kingdom, when the below conditions are met.

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2. Background: FBIS staff employees serving in Caversham for our London Bureau occupy quarters leased under the same standard U.S. Government lease that is used by London State Department. Commercial rental property in the Caversham area is difficult to find and it is virtually impossible to find a landlord who will consider a lease for more than one year at a time because of escalating housing prices and constant changes in interest rates. As a result, leases for one year minus one day are routinely negotiated to permit savings in TLA costs and to allow the bureau to escape stamp act charges of one percent of annual rental.

The standard leases contain escape clauses for the government and for the landlord. The latter is required under the U.K. Rent Act, which stipulates that if the owner wants to repossess his own residence the tenant must, on being given due notice, give it up. Refusal to vacate the property will ultimately result in eviction. Thus, almost without exception all bureau rentals are private residences let for the duration of the owner's stay abroad or elsewhere in England for employment reasons. Recently, several claims for moving expenses were incurred as the result of landlords returning from overseas and invoking the escape clause to repossess their homes.

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3. In view of the above, FBIS requests approval in principal to reimburse FBIS Caversham employees on a case by case basis for moving expenses in those circumstances when it can be documented that the USG had initially made every attempt to obtain a lease in excess of the individuals tour of duty, was able to obtain at least a one year minus one day lease with option for extension, and the landlord subsequently has either refused to extend that lease or has invoked the escape clause in accordance with the U.K. Rent Act. In each case, we would seek specific SSA/DDA approval to relieve an employee of this undue financial hardship.

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